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THE GULL

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Golden Gate Audubon Society

Berkeley, California

Volume 71

Number 2

February 1989

REPRODUCTIVE FAILURE OF 1986: WAS CHERNOBYL A CAUSE?

In the summer of 1986 a massive and unprecedented reproductive failure of land birds was documented in coastal central California. **David DeSante** will present the details of this phenomenon at our February meeting. He will also present more recent work aimed at determining the extent of this reproductive failure in other parts of North America, and will discuss the relationship of this failure with the passage of a radioactive cloud from the Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster.

DeSante is currently establishing the Institute for Bird Population, an organization which will study the distribution of birds, especially in relation to environmental changes. He will be setting up biomonitoring studies, using mist nets, throughout the country. DeSante was formerly Scientific Director of land bird research at Point Reyes Bird Observatory, and has taught biology at Stanford University and Reed College. He has written and published several books on birds.

Come and learn about this topic of global proportions **Thursday, Feb. 9th at 7:30 p.m.** at the **Northbrae Community Church**, at 941 The Alameda, Berkeley.

—JOELLE BUFFA

NAS PRESIDENT BERLE:

A new era may have begun for those of us concerned about wildlife and the environment. On Nov. 30, the executives of four other conservation groups and I met with President-elect George Bush. Since the door to the White House was firmly closed to environmentalists during the Reagan era, this meeting was seen as a turn-about rich in potential for positive change.

During his campaign, George Bush promised to give his attention to a number of environmental problems that face the nation and the world. At our meeting, the new President reconfirmed his commitment to environmental protection. Most important, he promised to take seriously the many recommendations the conservation community made in *Project Blueprint*. These suggestions on a wide variety of environmental challenges were compiled for the new administration

by an unprecedented coalition of eighteen major conservation groups.

We are cautiously optimistic that George Bush will distance himself from the failed environmental policies of the Reagan Administration and chart a new course.

The Audubon Activist Network, led by our Capitol Hill office, includes Society staff, chapter leaders and dedicated grassroots conservationists in every corner of the country. During the last congressional session, you and your nationwide team helped rewrite the Clean Water Act, reauthorize the Endangered Species Act, pass new pesticide legislation, stall oil development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, save wildernesses and wetlands and perform countless other miracles large and small. Our expert lobbyists emphasized that they cannot get far without your support, and your support so far has been terrific.

The *Audubon Activist* and *The Gull* will keep you abreast of important wildlife issues as the 101st Congress gets rolling.

OUR NEW OFFICE

Come and see us. We moved on Jan. 4 and are getting adjusted to our new facilities. Office hours are the same: Tuesday through Friday from 9–12 and 1–4. The telephone number is unchanged.

THANKS

The move was smooth and much helped through the efforts of President Tom White and our stalwart Paul Green.

FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

Saturday, Feb. 4—Panoche Valley.

Sunday, Feb. 5—Los Banos (\$).

Wednesday, Feb. 8—Mini-trip to Lafayette Reservoir (\$-parking).

(See *The Gull* for January for details of the above.)

Saturday, Feb. 11—Lake Merced, San Francisco. Meet at 9 a.m. at the south end of Sunset Blvd. in the Lake Merced Circle. This is a good time to see wintering grebes and ducks. If you take the #72 bus be sure to get off at Ocean Ave., because the next stop is Winton Dr. about one-half mile away. Lunch is optional for this half day trip. Leader: Aileen Pierson (563-8431). (✓)

Sunday, Feb. 12—Lake Merritt, Oakland. Meet at 9 a.m. at Grand Ave. and El Embarcadero by the Greek Colonnade. Trip ends at noon. Bring binoculars, scope, and field guide if you have them. This is an excellent opportunity to observe wintering ducks and grebes at close range and to study their field identification. This trip is recommended for beginners, and is wheelchair accessible. There is a restaurant at the lake for brunch after birding. Rain cancels trip. Leader: Joan Zawaski (433-1700 days, 530-2427 eve.). (✓)

Sunday, Feb. 26—Monterey Bay Pelagic Trip. See *The Gull* (pg. 12) for January for details.

Wednesday, March 8—Mini-trip to Mitchell Canyon. We will meet at 9:30 a.m. Take Hwy. 24 through the Caldecott Tunnel. At Walnut Creek take Ygnacio Valley Rd. Go approximately 8 miles, turn right onto Mitchell

Canyon Rd. and proceed to the parking lot at the end of the road. This is a delightful area with easy streamside walking, and many songbirds. Wear shoes suitable for walking in mud, and bring your lunch. Rain cancels trip. Leader: Anna Wilcox (351-9301) and Jean Marie Spoelman. (✓)

Trips marked with \$ go to parks or other sites that require an entrance fee.

Carpooling arrangements will be attempted for trips marked (✓).

Problems: If for any reason you have difficulty getting in touch with a field trip leader, or need information regarding a trip, or can take a passenger on a trip, call Russ Wilson (524-2399).

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

OBSERVATIONS

November 30 through December 27

A high pressure system off the coast persisted to the middle of December. During that time San Francisco experienced a record-setting 73 degrees Dec. 8. The East Bay hills had cold winds up to 100 miles an hour when low and high pressure systems got together mid-state, and winter finally arrived during the last half of the month bringing rain and even snow to a few hills around the Bay. Landbirds, maybe completely discouraged by the confusing weather patterns, were down in numbers during the first Christmas Bird Counts (CBC) of the season.

Petrel through Ducks

A **Mottled Petrel** was sighted 100-150 miles southwest of Pt. Arena from a research vessel Dec. 8 (PP). A Black-vented Shearwater off Pilar Pt. Dec. 17 was a nice addition to the Crystal Springs CBC (RSTh). Very few Cattle Egrets were reported this month: one at Lake Merritt in Oakland Dec. 1 remained at least through the Oakland

CBC, Dec. 18 (JaH, ToC, *fide* PC); one was found off Mayer Ranch Road south of Fairfield Dec. 18 (MBG); and another was along Willowside Road west of Santa Rosa Dec. 18 (BDP). A White-faced Ibis, unusual vagrant to the coast in our area, especially in winter, was found at the Salinas River mouth Dec. 23 (DR).

Fourteen Eurasian Wigeons during the month was a little below average (mob). The male and female Tufted Ducks in San Francisco spent most of the month at Old Sutro Baths, at least to Dec. 21 for the San Francisco CBC (RS, mob). An immature male **King Eider** graced Moss Landing Harbor Dec. 9-26 (DEG, *fide* RER, mob). The Bolinas Lagoon male Harlequin remained at his milepost (15.37) through the period (mob), and two female Harlequin Ducks were seen in Tomales Bay on Dec. 17 for the Pt. Reyes CBC (*fide* AD). An Oldsquaw was found at San Francisco Bay NWR Dec. 14, and remained at least through Dec. 18 (GCh, *fide* JL). Another Oldsquaw was in Moss Landing Harbor Dec. 26 (MLa). About sixty-seven Barrow's Goldeneye were noted during December in our area (mob).

Raptors through Alcids

A Northern Goshawk was seen flying south over the San Francisco Zoo Dec. 4 (AI). A Broad-winged Hawk was near Baker Beach Dec. 17 (RS). Another was found just southeast of Mt. San Bruno Dec. 23 (ASH). Numerous Rough-legged Hawks continued to be found coastally throughout December—ten were seen from Miramontes Pt. Road, Half Moon Bay, Dec. 4 (RSTh). A probable **Gyr Falcon** perched atop Inverness Ridge Dec. 11 (RS, *fide* AD), far from observers near Tomales Bay.

At least seven Lesser Golden-Plovers

continued to be found at Spaletta Ranch through Dec. 11 (AG, BDP). One was at Hayward Shoreline Park Dec. 15 (RJR, *fide* PEG). Another Lesser Golden-Plover was near the intersection of Natividad and Rogy Roads south of Salinas Dec. 22 (DR), and one was south of Higgins Creek Road in San Mateo Co. Dec. 24 (PJM). A flock of 110 Mountain Plovers was seen from Route 25 Road south of Gilroy Dec. 4 (GMcK). More unusual was a single Mountain Plover found in the dredge disposal area just south of Estudillo Canal in San Leandro Dec. 12 (REJ). The Rock Sandpiper at Princeton Jetty continued to be seen through Dec. 24 (KGH, PJM). Another Rock Sandpiper was near Miramontes Pt., San Mateo Co. Dec. 10 (AKr).

The first year Franklin's Gull at Stockton sewage ponds was last noted Dec. 7 (GFi), and the Little Gull off Staten Island Road, San Joaquin Co. was last seen Dec. 17 (DGY). Two Black-legged Kittiwakes were viewed from Pigeon Pt. Dec. 23 (RSTh). At least three **Parakeet Auklets** were spotted from a research vessel 98 miles southwest of Pt. Arena Dec. 8 (PP).

Landbirds

A White-winged Dove visited the Sunset District in San Francisco Dec. 3 (DPM). One was in the same area last year in early November. Two Long-eared Owls were found at the mouth of Pine Gulch Creek Dec. 9–10 (PRBO, KH). Another was discovered at Pilarcitos Creek mouth Dec. 17 during the Crystal Springs CBC (RSTh). Three Short-eared Owls were found in December: one near Doolittle Pond, Oakland, Dec. 2 (AWi); one near the entrance to the Tule Elk Range at Tomales Pt. Dec. 2 (PT); and one at Palo Alto Baylands Dec. 21 (MPe). A Red-naped Sapsucker was seen along

Los Trancos Road, Portola Valley Dec. 19 (PLN). An interesting sapsucker believed to be a hybrid between Red-breasted and either Red-naped or Yellow-bellied was at the Arastradero Preserve, Palo Alto the same day (*fide* PLN).

The Pygmy Nuthatches in the Oakland Hills still seemed to be maintaining a claw-hold on their habitat as three were found on the Oakland CBC Dec. 18 (DPM). The Bendire's Thrasher remained at the Jahant Road residence in Lodi at least through Dec. 13 (JM, GMcK, AWi). An immature **Wagtail** species, either **White** or **Black-backed** was at the Moonglow Dairy near Moss Landing Dec. 23–26 (DEG, *fide* DR, MLa). A Tennessee Warbler was spotted along Crossover Dr. in Golden Gate Park Dec. 24 (MiW).

Nine Palm and five Black-and-white Warblers enjoyed our area during December (mob), and one American Redstart lingered at Middle Lake at least through Dec. 21, CBC day (JM). A **Worm-eating Warbler** was near Miramontes Road, Half Moon Bay, Dec. 3 (PJM). A Northern Waterthrush was discovered at the Cypress St. ponds, Pt. Reyes Station on the Pt Reyes CBC Dec. 17 (JW).

A Clay-colored Sparrow was found along Higgins Purisima Road south of Half Moon Bay Dec. 10 (RSTh). Only one Sharp-tailed Sparrow was reported during the period, at Palo Alto Baylands Dec. 21 (JMa). Twenty Swamp Sparrows lurked in marshes coastally during December (mob). Fewer White-throated Sparrows than last year were noted, seven being found in our area through the period (mob). A Harris' Sparrow was found in Merced Co. at the San Luis NWR Dec. 9 (BDi). The Harris' Sparrow wintering in San Francisco remained in the weedy landfill at the foot of Cargo Way at least through

Dec. 21 (HG, PDG). The Dark-eyed Junco, Gray-headed race, discovered at a Moraga residence Nov. 19, remained at least through Dec. 18 (GA). A few Lapland Longspurs continued to be found at Spaletta Plateau in early December with as many as eight there Dec. 3 (MPe), and fifteen to twenty were at the Hall Ranch Dec. 21 (KB). One Chestnut-collared Longspur at the Hall Ranch obliged CBC observers Dec. 17 (DDeS).

The pair of Great-tailed Grackles was still at Aquatic Park on San Francisco CBC day, Dec. 21 (BHo). A flock of around twenty-five Red Crossbills was found at Five Brooks Dec. 1 (GMF), but by Dec. 10 only two or three were noted (BDP).

Observers: Garth Alton, Bruce Barrett (BBrr), Stephen F. Bailey, Dix Borning, Joe Broyles, Ken Burton, Gail Cheeseman (GCh), Tom Condit (ToC), Paul Covell, Aaron Cutler, Dave DeSante, Ann Dwart, Bob Diedericks (BDi), Steve Edelman, Gary M. Fellers, Marc Fenner (MFe), George Finger (GFi), Shawneen E. Finnegan, Douglas E. George, Al Ghiorso, Wilma Ghiorso, Philip E. Gordon, Helen Green, Paul D. Green, Marguerite B. Gross, Keith Hansen, Jay Harlow (JHa), Kevin G. Hintsa, Bob Hirt (BHi), Chris Hobbs, Bob Hogan (BHo), David A. Holway, Alan S. Hopkins, Al Indelicato, Robert E. Jerrell, John Keane (JKe), Richard Kovac, Andy Kratter (AKr), Michael Larkin (MLa), Jim Liskovec (JLk), John Mariani (JMa), Gail McKernon, Peter J. Metropulos, Joseph Morlan, Scott Morrical (SMo), Daniel P. Murphy, Paul L. Noble, Robert O'Brien, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Mike Perkins (MiP), Noel Perkins, Magnus Persmark (MPe), Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Peter Pyle, David C. Rice, Jean M. Rich-

mond, Robert J. Richmond, Don Roberson, Robin E. Roberson, Scott Smithson, Rich Stallcup, Ron S. Thorn (RSTh), Pepper Trail, Denise White, Mike Wihler (MiW), Anna Wilcox (AWi), David Wimpfheimer, Jon Winter, David G. Yee.

Please report observations to Northern California Rare Bird Alert: 528-0288 or 524-5592.

—HELEN GREEN

Observations Editor

2001 Yolo Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707

CONSERVATION NOTES

A NEW BIOSPHERE RESERVE

For the first time ever, the United Nations' *Man and Biosphere Program* has designated an international Biosphere Reserve combining ocean, islands, coast and land areas. In a November meeting in Paris of UNESCO the new *Central California Coast Biosphere Reserve* of 850,000 acres was officially approved. Linking the protected resources in Marin, San Francisco and San Mateo, the reserve is in close proximity to the intensely urbanized San Francisco Bay Area,

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—Peter A.A. Berle, President

another characteristic that makes this designation highly unusual.

It includes Point Reyes National Seashore; Golden Gate National Recreation Area; Farallon Islands National Wildlife Refuge; Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary; Mount Tamalpais, Tomales Bay, and Samuel P. Taylor State Parks; and the Marin Municipal Utility District. Approval required the cooperation of three federal agencies, one state agency and, for the first time, a county public utility, as well as scientists and citizens. The CCC Biosphere Preserve now joins 269 other such international designated sites.

These reserves conserve examples of representative and unique ecosystems, providing a center for management to meet human needs while promoting scientific understanding and ensuring conservation of invaluable natural resources.

This approval provides a unique link in global conservation and development efforts, as types of resources, economic possibilities and environmental problems in this region are shared by many areas in Latin America, Africa and the Pacific Basin. It will promote greater public understanding about the critical importance of wisely protecting irreplaceable natural heritage. Official designation is planned for February 1989. Laurie Weyburn, Director of PRBO is coordinator for the CCC Biosphere Reserve. Questions could be directed to her at PRBO, 4990 Shoreline Hwy., Stinson Beach, CA 94970.

CLEAN AIR ACT IN '89

Activists are suiting up for one of the big battles of the coming year: getting a new and better Clean Air Act passed by the 101st Congress. In a seemingly endless effort, environmentalists have been working to amend the bill with

provisions for controlling acid rain, air-born emissions of toxic chemicals and urban smog.

The "tough birds"—Audubon activists—fought hard in 1988 and made significant gains, particularly in the House of Representatives. More than 218 representatives—the magic majority of House members—signed the Vento-Green letter urging the House to move ahead on clean air legislation. Although House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman John Dingell, from the auto-producing state of Michigan, had refused to let a strong bill out of committee, it looked as if a compromise was still possible in late 1988. But the final agreement was too weak to protect the environment and the public health, and environmentalists were unable to support it.

The work of Audubon activists in pushing forward this critical legislation cannot be underestimated, according to Audubon's grassroots coordinator Connie Mahan, and it will be even more so in the new term. She says "We're very close to getting a clean air bill. If our clean air 'tough birds' can stick it out and not lose heart, I believe we can win this issue in 1989."

(from Audubon Chapter release)

BACK YARD BIRDER

Searching for a new bird in the new year? In quest of a particular bird? Perhaps one of your New Year's resolutions is to be better prepared for what you might see birdwise wherever you might be? You may have your favorite sources for birding information. We all know to call the local chapter of Audubon. I have two handy paperback books to recommend.

Jean Richmond has collected complete information on 72 hot birding areas in *Birding Northern California*. Most areas

are within 100 miles of the Bay Area along with a few further afield. She includes detailed maps and directions, a description of facilities as well as what birds to look for and where to look. To obtain this book write to Mt. Diablo Chapter of Audubon Society, P.O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94596. It costs a bit more than \$10.

Birders' California by Don Roberson focuses on building a California bird list. With lots of dedication (along with some luck) 400 birds may be seen in our state. If you are a "hard-core" birder, willing to drive anywhere at anytime, you could see even more! This slim volume highlights specific birding spots all over California and includes tips to improve your birding skills and notes other useful books. I cannot recall where I obtained it, but try writing the American Birding Association, P.O. Box 4335, Austin, Texas 78765.

If you wish to go further than the boundaries of our state, read *Birding Around the World* by Aileen R. Lotz. It is subtitled "A Guide to Observing Birds Everywhere You Travel," and is chock-full of tidbits. It is part of a series of Teale Books printed by Dodd, Mead & Company, New York.

Birding is always more fun shared with fellow enthusiasts which is why Audubon's planned outings are so popular. Birding is considered a "passive" sport and with 30 MILLION participants is second only to gardening as such a sport. I'll be out there watching with the rest of you this year. Good birding!

—MEG PAULETICH

CRANEWATCHERS

Audubon's annual River Conference celebrates the arrival of the Sandhill Cranes on Nebraska's Platte River dur-

ing their northward migration. This year's conference, held as usual in Kearney, Nebraska, will run from March 16 to 20. As always, the highlight of the conference will be dawn and sunset trips to the river for spectacular cranewatching. For information write Audubon's West Central Office, 200 South Wind Place, Manhattan, Kansas 66502 or phone (913) 537-4385.

BALD EAGLE CONFERENCE

The Tenth Annual Bald Eagle Conference for eagle lovers and wildlife conservationists in general will gather in Klamath Falls, OR, Feb. 17-19, 1989.

The Klamath Basin is host to the largest concentration of wintering Bald Eagles in North America outside Alaska. The conference is held to coincide with the presence of wintering eagles and waterfowl in the basin so that participants can enjoy these magnificent birds.

The conference was originated to educate the public on the value of the eagles. Activists will include an array of outstanding speakers, workshops on raptor identification, photography, wildlife rehabilitation, tours to observe Bald Eagles, photo poster contests, and an evening banquet.

Presented by the Klamath Basin Audubon Society, National Audubon Society, Oregon Dept. of Fish and Game, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Oregon Institute of Technology. For information on registration write or call Charlotte Opp, 5873 Estate Drive, Klamath Falls, OR 97603. (503) 882-8488.

FREMONT ADULT SCHOOL BIRDING CLASSES

FIELD TRIPS CLASS

The class, taught by **Alice Hoch**, is designed for both beginning and experienced birders. On these weekly field trips, students will observe and learn about field identification life styles, and ecology of local birds.

It meets on six Tuesday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. beginning on February 28th and ending April 11. There will be no class March 21. Registration will be at 9:30 a.m. Feb. 28th in room 1 of the Fremont Adult School, 4700 Calaveras Ave., Fremont. Be prepared to bird-watch that morning. Class size is limited so you may want to pre-register by phone 791-5841.

Delta Field Trip

A one-day field trip with Alice Hoch to observe birds in the Delta is offered at a fee of \$17.50. Register by mail and include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the flag-pole in front of the Adult School on Feb. 11. Bring snacks, beverages, lunch and binoculars. If possible bring scopes and field guides. Students are responsible for their own transportation, but carpools can be arranged. Students who wish to meet the group in the Delta please arrange with the instructor (657-0475).

BIRD PHOTOGRAPHERS

The February meeting of BABP will, as usual, be at Baylands Interpretive Center, Wednesday, Feb. 1 at 7:30 p.m. with guest speaker Frans Lanting. The March meeting will be Wednesday, March 1 at 7:30 p.m. when member Dick Kuenne reports on his trip to Kenya last year. Membership information is available from BAPA, 1019 Los Prieta Ct., Los Altos, CA 94022.

COOPER SOCIETY

Peter Pyle of Point Reyes Bird Observatory will speak at the next meeting of the Northern California Chapter of Cooper Ornithological Society. His topic is Weather Patterns and the Timing of Seabird Breeding on Southwestern Farallon Island. The talk will be at 8 p.m., **Monday, Feb. 20** at the Audubon Richardson Bay Sanctuary, 376 Greenwood Beach Rd., Tiburon. All bird lovers are welcome.

GGAS FIELD TRIP REPORT

Ann Wilcox, on Nov. 19th, led twelve birders on a trip to Berkeley's Aquatic Park. She reports the weather overcast, no wind, about 55-60 °F. They saw forty-five species:

Pied-billed Grebe	9
Brown Pelican	6
Double-crested Cormorant.....	28
Great Egret	11
Snowy Egret	29
Black-crowned Night Heron	21
Mallard	18
Pintail	5
Surf Scoter	16
Barrow's Goldeneye.....	3
Bufflehead.....	7
Common Merganser.....	7
Ruddy Duck	4
Turkey Vulture	1
Northern Harrier	1
Red-tailed Hawk	1
Kestrel	1
Coot.....	30
Black-bellied Plover.....	3
Killdeer	7
Black-necked Stilt.....	7
Avocet	51
Willet	3
Least Sandpiper	11
Dunlin	18
Dowitcher, species	45
Bonaparte's Gull.....	5
Ring-billed Gull	18
California Gull	5
Herring Gull	1
Thayer's Gull	1
Western Gull	2
Forster's Tern.....	8

Rock Dove15
Anna's Humminbird3
Kingfisher2
Black Phoebe2
Bush Tit21
Ruby-crowned Kinglet2
Yellow-rumped Warbler11
Song Sparrow2
Brewer's Blackbird9
House Finch10
House Sparrow7

conifer bird species, particularly by sound. There will be a two week training session at the beginning of each study so that the researcher can brush up on his bird calls and learn field methods.

Call Kathryn Purcell at the Laboratory for current information.

NAS TELEVISION

Wildlife Poaching

The next *Audubon Television Special* goes behind the scenes to look at the men and women who enforce the nation's hunting laws. *Poaching and Trafficking in Wildlife* takes the viewers to the Great Smoky Mountains, where undercover Fish and Wildlife Service agents halt illegal hunting of black bear which were being sold as food, jewelry, and other products for substantial profit. In Utah, game wardens making spot checks find that one out of every four hunters violates federal laws. And waterfowl hunters are filmed slaughtering hundreds of geese, in some cases many times the allowable bag limits.

Other segments focus on the problem of hunting in national parks and the role of illegal hunting, collecting and trading in jeopardizing endangered species. *Poaching and Trafficking in Wildlife*, narrated by Richard Chamberlain, will be shown on SuperStation TBS on Friday, March 3 at 10:50 p.m. (Eastern); Saturday, March 18 at 8:05 a.m. (Eastern); Tuesday, March 21 at 9:50 p.m. (Eastern). The show will premier of Public Television Stations during the Summer 1989. Don't miss this important film.

TRACKING RAPTORS

Steve Hoffman, director of the *Western Foundation for Raptor Conservation*, will present Western Raptor Flyways: Indicators of Ecosystem Health, an hour-long slideshow on Thursday evening, Feb. 16 at the Josephine Randall, Jr. Museum Way, San Francisco. Sponsored by the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory, the program will begin at 8 p.m. admission is \$2 which will benefit raptor migration studies. For information call 331-0730.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

Several positions beginning the first week of May and extending through July or early August will be available for birders. The positions are temporary and are at the GS-5 level (approximately \$7.27 per hour). The Forestry Sciences Laboratory, (209) 487-5588, 2081 E. Sierra Ave., Fresno, CA 93710 will be conducting point counts and will spot map bird territories on two 42-ha grids in mixed conifer stands in the Sierra Nevada east of Fresno.

Applicants must be excellent in identifying oak-woodland and mixed-

NEWS FROM THE RANCH

Though most people view A.C.R. as a sanctuary and provider of various educational services. It also supports an exciting and vital research program. John Kelly, resident biologist at Cypress Grove Preserve, discussed some such projects and findings at our last board of directors' meeting.

For example, since digging pools in Olema Marsh in 1983, bulrush and willow have flourished. Together with blackberry, they have multiplied in Livermore Marsh as well, Bird population tions have increased accordingly. Various dabbling ducks are using the pools. Tricolored Blackbirds colonized Livermore Marsh this past breeding season and seemed quite successful. Postulating on the absence of Red-winged Blackbirds, John informed us Marsh Wrens attack their nests and destroy the eggs. This may be the reason those of us who bird at San Francisco's Lake Merced have been unable to locate a red-wing breeding colony in what would seem an ideal habitat. He also reported that a loss of fresh water marsh edge, and adjoining mud flats, may impact migrants such as Pectoral Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, and Lesser Yellowlegs.

Of course we need research on aspects of the environment beyond plants and birds. John proposes sedimentation studies, monitoring of aquaculture practices used in Tomales Bay, an investigation of marsh vegetation progression and change, and long term observations on marsh development with an eye on stabilizing the vegetation pattern when it reaches maximum habitat value.

We at A.C.R. are very pleased the Bay Area Audubon Council held its January 21st meeting at the Bouverie

Audubon Preserve. The bond between ACR and chapters of the National Audubon Society in our area is a special one. More than half our directors and officers come to us from Audubon Chapters. Our organization was founded by its sponsoring chapters, and it continues to reflect the philosophy of those founders and their successors. Not only is ACR an independent non profit corporation it is a sanctuary of Marin, Golden Gate, Sequoia and Madrone Audubon Societies. Many of our educational programs are geared to the needs of our sponsoring chapters and the community at large. So welcoming our friends in B.A.A.C. is a real pleasure, and we hope this new use of our facilities can continue in the future.

The Ranch will open to the public on March 18 this year. The public season will continue on weekends and holidays until July 16. We are opening a little later than usual, so the Great Blue Herons should be pretty well established and the Great Egrets should be starting to visit the colony.

As usual Audubon Chapters are responsible for providing hosts at the entrance station. This is a great way to get a little more involved with the Ranch and meet some fellow Audubon members. Often there is enough time to hike the longer trails, something many of us overlook on other visits to the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve.

Golden Gate Audubon members will host on the weekends of March 18-19, 25-26, and July 1-2, 8-9. You can volunteer by calling the office at 843-2222. If you wish to volunteer, but can't make it on those dates, please call the Ranch at (415) 868-9244. Edris Cole will be happy to place you on our schedule.

DAN MURPHY

GGAS EXTENDED FIELD TRIPS

TEXAS SPRING MIGRATION APRIL 22-29

The upper Texas coast and pine woods fill with hundreds of warblers, thrushes, tanagers, shorebirds, etc., during spring migration. Leaders fee \$125. Participants share transportation costs, and pay their

own expenses. Arrangements by leader. Limited to eight participants.

THAILAND DEC. 1-17

Birding, sightseeing, shopping in Southeast Asia's best destination. Chiang Mai, Khao Yai N.P., Rangsit marsh, Bangkok. Great food, wonderful people. Leaders Phil Round and Chris Carpenter.

Call GGAS office for detailed itineraries.

GIFTS and BEQUESTS

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In Memory of

Judge Norman Gregg

Helen Brenner

FOR WETLANDS

FOR RARE BIRD ALERT

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Sam and Mary

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Jane & Michael Larkin

Hazel Houston

The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 1250 Addison St., #107B, Berkeley, CA 94702. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in *The Gull* as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.



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Mail for all individuals listed above should be sent to GGAS office.

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The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917,
and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.